

first, do no harm

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by [Not4typicalwriter](#)

Summary

Day 6: Soulmate AU

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"As usual," Karl rolled his eyes.

"I got another one too, up the forearm," George showed him the shimmer of white. "What the fuck are they doing Karl?"

"Don't know," Karl said snappishly, though his attitude wasn't really geared towards George rather his general annoyance at the situation. "Don't care."

"Karl," George called.

"No, I hate them," Karl said adamantly. "It's not a coincidence anymore and they're making

my life really hard."

"I suppose," George said.

"Until we get an explanation, they're assholes," Karl nodded. "Three times. Punz said it, three times in the last- two weeks?"

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When your soulmate bleeds, you bleed. Just the visuals. You don't get hurt, you don't feel the pain, but for a second there, you will know that they're going through, and as soon as it happens, the blood disappears.

Now, when you're a surgeon and your soulmate bleeds every time you have a trauma come in (such as a drive-by shooting and other crime-related stuff) you tend to question what the hell they're doing with their lives. And if they have some kind of involvement in the traumas.

Notes

for yoana and annika because you two are some of my biggest supported in got your 6, and that made me want to make another multichap

BLOOD WARNING

whole au revolves around blood, so WARNING

I'm late and this is long af and guess you watched too much grey's anatomy?

I do hope you guys enjoy this though!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Chapter 1

"George?" Karl called.

"I'm not doing too bad," George replied.

The two surgeons were standing in front of each other, wiping off blood from their skin with a wet towel. George was bleeding from a grazed wound on his neck and his side. Karl was bleeding from what looked suspiciously like bullet holes on his left shoulder and forearm. Half a dozen towels between them each stained dark red with blood, the two doctors threw it into a bucket they kept under the bench.

If you knew the truth, they weren't actually bleeding. That's why the towels turned back white a few moments later in the bucket. But that's an explanation for later.

"Incoming trauma," Punz yelled as he banged on the lounge door.

Karl and George shared a look before putting their clothes back on, an uneasy feeling sat on their stomachs. They shared a nod before going to the emergency room.

The blaring ambulance sirens were anything if not familiar when you're standing at the doors of the emergency room. Karl knew as much.

No matter how long he'd been doing this job, it will never get any easier. He inhaled, and exhaled, hearing the sirens get louder as the ambulance started to pull in.

Around him were the other attending, ready to rush into action. Though Karl holds a chief status in the hospital, he knew Punz would take the reigns on this one.

The blond trauma surgeon stood next to him and nudged his arm just to stop him from spacing out. He nodded to which Karl nodded back.

In three, two-

An ambulance came skidding in, stopping right in front of the E.R door before the paramedics started running out and opening the back door.

"Fourteen-year-old Kelsey Murphy, GWS to the leg and abdomen. Abdomen rigid, systolic 75, last

pulse 147," The paramedic started listing off the moment she knew she could be heard. Punz ran to the door and helped bring down the stretcher from the back of the ambulance.

"She's fourteen?" Punz sighed exasperatedly. "Get her to trauma 2," He raised his voice to boom over the sirens. "Where's Bad? Somebody page him!"

"I'm here!" The head of pediatrics came running down, taking control of the stretcher before bringing it into the ER. "Someone page Foolish, I might need Ortho."

Another ambulance not even seconds later, paramedics running out the driver's side to open the back.

"Mid-forties male, GCS is 6, open skull fracture with active bleeding and a blown pupil," The second ambulance's paramedic started listing out.

"Oh god," Punz muttered. "Looks like it's a branch of the MCA. Pressure's not gonna tamponade it. Clear O.R. 4," He yelled.

"Punz, you go take this with Sam," Karl nodded. "I'll take over."

"Got it," Punz nodded as he started rolling away. "Somebody page Sam to O.R. 4, let's go!"

A third ambulance had pulled up moments before. Karl took over for emergency room management and greeted the paramedics.

"We got a white male, mid-to-late twenties, single entrance wound to the fifth intercostal space, no exit wound. Lost vitals. We had to do an emergency thoracotomy," The driver called out as they threw the ambulance door open.

"You cracked his chest open?" Karl asked.

"Well, I did," Karl looked up to look at a very familiar Puffy, hands stuck in the patient's chest. "As long as I keep my hand on the hole in his right ventricle, his heart is still beating."

"Skip trauma, tell them to prep O.R. 2," Karl directed. "Techno-"

"I got it," Techno said immediately, turning to his young intern. "Prep O.R. 2, looks like you're scrubbing in today Ranboo."

Puffy was perched on the stretcher, hands covered in blood as they slowly moved the stretcher down from the ambulance.

"Where's George? There could be torrential bleeding. I'm gonna need back up," Techno said as he brought his patient into the hospital.

"I'm here, I'm here Techno," George said.

George gave Karl a look, an intense eye gaze if you might, before following the Cardiothoracic surgeon into O.R.

And so the last ambulance came rolling in.

"I got male, 28 years old, GSW to the right upper arm and left leg, we don't have much info, he's pretty stable," Karl was nodding as he listened to the information given to him.

"Ant, do labs, trauma series, x-ray his leg, and arms," Karl said. "Get him to trauma 3."

"Got it," Ant said, rolling in the patient with a couple of nurses scrambling around.

"What happened?" Karl asked the paramedics.

He knew he was supposed to run in there, to help his patients, but he couldn't help but pry. He had a reason, I promise you he has a reason. Both him and George.

"No clue," Karl recognized Ponk as one of the paramedics that often times made rounds with Puffy. "There was a drive-by. We don't know which one of the four was the target, or if they hit the target at all."

"You're saying police is coming," Karl said.

"Mfraid so," Ponk nodded.

"Right," Karl sighed.

Karl left the paramedics to clean up after themselves and ran back into the emergency room to see Ant trying to intubate their patient.

"Ant, what's going on?" Karl immediately rushed to his side.

"Vitals dropped, x-rays were clear, but I did an ultrasound sound and he has blood in his stomach, his pressure is dropping," Ant listed off.

"Somebody, get me an O.R.," Karl yelled.

Karl was on his way in the middle of trying to transport the patient and Antfrost stopped him.

"Karl you're bleeding," Ant said.

Karl's gloved hands were bloody, but he'd just assumed it was from the patients he'd been handling. He instinctively reached up to his neck to see even more blood coating his latex gloves.

"Why are you bleeding?" Ant asked.

"Don't worry about it," Karl shook his head. "It's not that kind of blood."

Ant took a step back, mouth slightly agape, but shook himself back as the two surgeons transported their patient to an empty O.R. to try and save their patient's life.

It's not that kind of blood.

The phantom mirror, also sometimes known as the soulmate curse. Most people call it the

soulmate bond but Karl thought it more as a curse. At least in the last few years, he did.

The rules were, when your soulmate bleeds, you bleed. Don't worry, you don't feel the pain, and you're not actually losing blood, and it's strictly for injuries, not blood transfusions or other bodily activities. But you can see it, the scars, the wound, blood dripping even though on the mirrored side of your body. The blood will flow and it will most definitely stain your clothes, but the blood disappears almost immediately, within 20-30 seconds. The scars are there, though only a whisper of white on top of your skin, you can barely see it.

It is beyond terrifying because this is completely unexplainable. You have people bleeding when their soulmates get a paper cut and then you have the car accidents. It disappears, seconds later, seemingly like your body only wanted to show you what happened but then forgets immediately.

But when you lived in a world that has never known any different, you learn to live with it. Sometimes you would want to know if your soulmate is imminent, life-threatening danger, I guess.

Phantom Mirror. The bane of Karl's existence.

And boy, do you know how difficult it is to keep phantom bleeding when you're a literal doctor? A surgeon, to be exact. Specifically for times like these when you can't tell the difference between your patient's blood or your overdramatic stage fake blood prop?

It doesn't help that Karl's soulmate bleeds. A lot. And even worse, this wasn't the first time both he and George were bleeding before a large trauma came in.

Makes you think, huh?

"That was the third drive-by in the past two weeks, what the hell are they doing down in the Southside?" Punz was fuming when he stalked into the Attending's lounge.

Techno was hogging the entire couch, lying across the whole length, head propped up on one end, his leg lifted on the other. His arm placed on top of his face covering his eyes as if he was trying to go to sleep.

Needless to say, the 4 surgeries took the surgeons all day. And they were exhausted beyond belief. Karl would have to talk to George later, but not when his other colleagues were in the room.

"We can't keep doing this," Bad said. "It's not safe."

"Bad, *we* aren't doing anything. We *can't* do anything," Sam said. "That's literally the problem. We

have people on the street shooting each other, and they get dropped into our emergency room, and-
" Sam sighed as he tossed his dirty scrubs into his locker. "I don't know what to do anymore."

"Well that's what we get for accepting the position in an area like this," Techno mumbled.

"We're overworked, overspent-" Punz continued to ramble. "I'm the only Trauma attending in this goddamn place and we get rushes every other day, I can't keep up!"

"It doesn't help that our funding's being cut next month," Foolish muttered.

"I'm sorry," Ant said. "Our funding is what?" He exclaimed.

"Yeah," Foolish grimaced. "Heard from the board themselves. We're cutting down from 300 beds to 250, 10 of which are our ER beds-"

"Fuck off, no the fuck we are not," Punz hissed.

"One of our bots," Foolish continued. "Sorry, Sam."

"Wait my bot? *My neurosurgical robots?*" Sam exclaimed. "The one that literally helps me navigates people's brains? That one?" Sam has stood up and strode across the room to stand face to face with Foolish who immediately raised his hands.

"Look, I'm just passing information," Foolish said. "They're cutting down my budget too, apparently I'm not allowed to do spinal surgery because it costs more money than other ortho procedures."

"You're ortho," Ant said. "Spinal is literally your most important-" He sighed. "What about me? What are they taking away?"

"I mean most vascular surgeries are deemed too expensive Ant," Foolish said. "Nothing is safe. Not NICU beds," He looked at Bad. "Not our PET or CAT, or MRIs, one or all of them. Not unnecessary cosmetics procedures-"

"They're not unnecessary!" George yelled immediately. "Oh condemn me because I want to give people a better quality of life and make them have confidence after a third-degree burn even if it takes 7 skin grafts." George shoved Techno's feet away and slumped on the couch. Techno simply placed his legs back on top of George's lap.

"Right," Techno drawled. "It's not like I haven't been paid for the last two months."

The room got quiet and turned to the sleeping cardiothoracic surgeon.

"Techno-" Karl said. "What do you mean you haven't been paid for two months?"

"Never mind, forget I said anything," Techno muttered.

"No," Karl said. "Techno, what do you mean?"

"Don't worry about it," Techno said. "Blood God doesn't care if he gets paid," he joked about his nickname to avoid the attention.

"Techno," And on Bad's voice did Techno finally concede.

"Did a heart transplant. One of your babies Bad, remember?" Techno said.

"Callum Thorpe, 27 months old, Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome," Bad recited.

"You asked for help," Techno replied pointedly. "Covered it with my own money," Techno answered shortly. "Also they wouldn't let me keep Ranboo, so I'm paying Ranboo out of pocket."

"Oh my god," Ant said. "What about the insurance comp-"

"Come now Ant," Techno finally got up from his sleeping position. "Insurance?"

"Techno, I didn't mean pay it with your own money-" Bad said.

"Well, I wanted to try the Fontan Procedure and it didn't cost that much anyway," Techno shrugged. "Cost really goes down by a bit when you take away the cost of service. God am I'm an expensive service."

Everyone knew for a fact he was lying. It probably did cost a lot. Not that he was ever going to admit it. And no one was going to

"They can't take my NICU beds," Bad started again. "I've got babies, they need the Neonatal incubators, the phototherapy lamps, the radiant warmers."

"And I don't wanna spend the rest of my career doing hip replacements," Foolish answered.

"I swear to god if they ask me to do brain surgery freehanded-" Sam grumbled. "I'm gonna do it but I'm going to practice on them."

"If they take any funding away from the ER-" Punz shook his head. "I won't be able to work."

"Karl," George called. "What are you thinking over there?"

Karl had his hand on his neck, rubbing the place where he'd been bleeding, not once but twice today, absentmindedly. Mind spaced out somewhere that he couldn't even hear himself be called.

"Karl," Ant called much to no avail. "Chief."

"Yes," Karl finally looked up, shaking his head back to existence. "Sorry. I'll go talk to the board to get more info, thank you Foolish, for bringing it to my attention."

"No problem chief," Foolish sighed.

Karl's pager beeped on his belt, though somehow he looked at George first before checking what the pager called him too. He knew though, the entire lounge knew what it was for.

"Gotta go," Karl bowed out though George followed him out and jogged next to him.

"Ant said you bled, again," George said.

"As usual," Karl rolled his eyes.

"I got another one too, up the forearm," George showed him the shimmer of white. "What the fuck are they doing Karl?"

"Don't know," Karl said snappishly, though his attitude wasn't really geared towards George rather his general annoyance at the situation. "Don't care."

"Karl," George called.

"No, I hate them," Karl said adamantly. "It's not a coincidence anymore and they're making my life really hard."

"I suppose," George said.

"Until we get an explanation, they're assholes," Karl nodded. "Three times. Punz said it, three times in the last- two weeks?"

"They're definitely involved," George agreed.

"Oh wow, you think?" Karl said sarcastically.

"Forgive me for trying to be optimistic," George replied.

"Your soulmate is an asshole," Karl said. "So is mine."

George stared flatly at him, rolling his eyes and only being able to sigh at the situation. He was a little exhausted at this conversation that they always have, and so was Karl.

"Alright, whatever," George said. "Have fun with your halves."

"Will do," Karl grinned cynically before heading towards a waiting room full of people.

The Halves.

It's not actually a real thing, it's just something the doctors came up with. With the Phantom Mirror being a thing, you can't blame random people -the other halves- to come into the emergency room when they start bleeding profusely even if it was only for 2-3 minutes.

It makes sense, that people who feel and know of their soulmates getting injured really badly will scour the closest emergency rooms if they're lucky their soulmates were in the same city. Hospitals even have specialized waiting rooms.

"I've interviewed them Chief," Niki answered. "I sent a bunch of them home, but there are three left."

"All halves or?" Karl asked the pink-haired head nurse.

"No," She replied. "One is the girl's parents, one is a brother, and I think one is a Half."

"Right," Karl said. "You wanna page Bad for me? He can take the parents, and uhm- do you know who's brother? Which patient?"

"Not sure," Niki replied though her hands were busy paging Bad. "He's very mysterious."

"Okay," Karl nodded before walking towards the waiting room.

The second Karl walked through the doors, two people stood up and rushed towards him. The way they were holding each other, faces completely devastated with worry, Karl knew exactly who they

were.

"Mr. and Mrs. Murphy," Karl greeted.

"How's Kelsey? Can we see her? No one has told us anything, we just got the call-" Mrs. Murphy rushed her words. "I should've had my phone on me but I-"

"Please," Mr. Murphy said. "I was just outside the city for work, and-"

"Your daughter had a gunshot wound to the thigh, comminuted femur fracture, laceration to the superficial femoral artery. We were able to stop the hemorrhaging in the leg and also the abdominal bleeding-" Karl was used to talking like he would to his peers, but when he saw their faces he stopped.

He turned his head to look out of the door and see Bad walking towards them. Karl waved Bad over, smiling gently towards the Murphys.

"Your daughter is currently stable, and most importantly alive," Karl simplified. "I'll have you talk to our Peds surgeon, he was the one who operated on your daughter."

Karl gently guided them out of the waiting room and towards Bad who was waiting for them just by the hallway. Greeting them with an equally warm smile and his upbeat tone, Bad walked the Murphys over towards the pediatrics wing.

Karl turned back into the room only to immediately be met by a woman, around late thirties maybe? Karl didn't like to speculate, it's quite rude to ask a woman her age.

"I don't-" She started. "I don't know if I have. I was bleeding, and uhm-" she gulped.

"That's alright, completely understandable," Karl nodded. "Miss?"

"O'Donnell," She replied. "Mrs. O'Donnell actually. But uhm- my husband is fine."

Yikes.

"Okay," Karl said. "Would you like to describe where you were bleeding? Or how long ago it

was?"

"It was around two PM," Mrs. O'Donnell replied. "And uhm, it was bleeding here," She used her finger to point out on the upper left side of her forehead."

Karl nodded encouragingly, asking her to continue. His hands were already paging a call towards Sam though, for an optimistic outcome.

"But then an hour later or so, it's here-" she traced the line from the side of her ear to the back of her skull. "And also here," then another line from the top of her head to meet the line at the bottom of her head.

Those were precisely the cuts Sam had made when he removed the left side of the patient's skull to give room for his brain to swell. The odds are low, they've hardly ever connected concerned Halves with their patients, but I guess today was special.

"Mrs. O'Donnell, I will get you in contact with our neurosurgeon," Karl explained. "The good news is, your patterns are very close and he is still alive. Unfortunately, we've put him under a medically induced coma so his brain can heal properly."

"Oh my god, you have him?" Mrs. O'Donnell gasped.

"You'll have to describe more specifics to Dr. Sam, he's the one that worked closely on the patient-" Karl waved Sam over. "He'll need to verify. Sam, this is Mrs. O'Donnell," he introduced.

"Mrs. O'Donnell," Sam greeted gently. "Come with me please."

As the two walked down the hallway, Karl turned to the last man sitting in the waiting room. He has blond hair and piercing green eyes that shone behind a black face mask. He looked up at Karl and stood up.

"My turn now?" He said expectantly.

"Yes, you're here to see your brother," Karl said. "We have two patients that didn't come with an ID, and I'm not sure-"

"Cal," The man said. "He got shot in the chest." Karl looked at him and blinked. *How did he know* "Or so I heard."

"Oh," Karl said. "Right, I-"

"Is he okay?" He asked urgently.

"Your brother is alive, we had to get him on bypass and it was touch and go for a bit, but he's fine, he should be recovering very well," Karl explained.

"Oh thank god," The man behind the back sighed. "Can I see him?"

"Of course," Karl said, holding the door open to let both of them out and take the man towards the critical care rooms. "Mr-"

"Clay is fine," The man nodded.

"Right," Karl said awkwardly. "Mr. Clay."

"Just Clay," He corrected.

"Clay," Karl obliged. "I can take you to your brother, Cal? Was it?"

"Callahan," Clay nodded.

Karl was not one to judge weird names considering his own colleague's eccentric nicknames, but there was something about the masked man, perhaps that he chose to remain masked so far, or maybe the fluctuating level of concern, that unnerved Karl as he walked next to him.

Not to mention this Clay fellow was a little too dressed up for a hospital visit. A white fitted button-up shirt with dress pants, a vest to accompany, and a blazer thrown over his shoulder. He was tall and frankly a little intimidating by the way his shoes clicked across the floor.

Karl opened the door for Clay to walk through, the noise of the beeping machines greeting them. Clay quickly found his way to the bedside, fingers softly touching Callahan's hand.

Karl turned his head to look around, eyes finally meeting Technoblade's as he walked past the central area. He waved Techno over as the patient was Techno's, to begin with, and Techno initially obliged until he saw the man in the room. Techno's eyes widened, both in panic and shock, Techno simply shook his head, offering absolutely no explanation to Karl at all before leaving them.

"Uhm," Karl stuttered, a little shocked as his eyes followed Techno's figure until it fully disappeared. "Our cardiothoracic surgeon is a little occupied, but our head of plastics also operated on your brother, I could get him to fill you out on things and statu-"

"No, that's alright," Clay replied. "When can we get him out of here?"

"Well, it would be advised if he stayed-" Karl said. "It's a particularly difficult recovery."

"Yeah, but my family would much rather have him close to home," Clay explained. "I assure you, we can provide some proper accommodations for him the second it's safe to transport him."

"He could need constant medical attention, a nurse to administer the antibiotics-"

"We can afford it," Clay said. "Outpatient treatment and everything."

"Sir-" Karl said. "I don't think that's wise."

"It's just that-" Clay finally turned to look at Karl. "My brother is non-verbal, I really think he'd be much more comfortable at home."

"I assure you we would be able to accommodate," Karl said. "However, I'll consult his doctors, and they'll let you know what are the most recommended actions."

"Thank you," Clay nodded.

"I'll leave you to it," Karl bowed out to leave.

To say the day was very long was very much an understatement. George waved him goodbye when he dropped his best friend off at his apartment before driving back home to his place. He lived at a particularly lavish apartment building, as one does when they're a very successful surgeon. Locking his car behind him, he got into the elevator, still in his scrubs and looking like hell.

The elevator only went up one floor from the basement and opened at the ground floor and Karl cursed.

"Oh no," Nick said teasingly. "You haven't changed?"

"It's been a really long day okay?" Karl rolled his eyes though he kept the playful smile on his face.

"It's always a bad day for you when you haven't changed," Nick stated, walking into the elevator to stand with Karl.

Nick was his neighbor. His really cute, smart, moderately rich, built, strong, ruggedly handsome—wait what was he thinking about?

They'd always crossed paths, their two penthouses being the only two on their floor, so he tends to see a lot of his neighbor. Not that he minded.

They also spent quite a bit of time together, just hanging out on days off, watching movies, and cooking together (since neither of them likes to cook in particular so might as well do it together)

"So many things happened," Karl didn't really explain, unsure about how much Nick would indulge in this conversation.

"I see, I see," Nick chuckled. "How many lives did you save today, doctor?"

"One," Karl said. "We had four emergency patients, but I worked on one."

"Anything interesting happened?" Nick asked.

"Well, that's the third drive-by shooting this past two weeks," Karl told him. The elevator slowly went up to their floor, giving them plenty of time to talk to each other. Which honestly was one of Karl's favorite past times.

"What? Down South?" Nick asked and Karl nodded. "That's unfortunate. I'm glad you could save them though, you're just badass like that."

Karl felt his cheeks turned hot, pursing his lips to stop himself from giggling like a schoolgirl.

"Bet you were all like, *give me the scalpel*, and you were running with like, blood everywhere, and like *he's crashing, clear!*" Nick acted out this whole sequence very dramatically and did funny little voices to prove his point and that's when Karl finally broke and laughed.

"You're such a nimrod," Karl shook his head.

The elevator stopped and the door opened, both men walking out side by side.

"I think you're cool, you know that," Nick tilted his head. "Saving lives and all that."

Karl met his neighbor's eyes and Nick simply winked at him.

God, why can't you be my soulmate instead? A computer programmer, successful, handsome, and doesn't bleed every other day, the worst injury you get is probably from when you try to cook.

"I have a bottle of wine, if you want it," Nick nudged towards his apartment. "I can run you a bath, I have all the bath salts and candles-"

Karl wants to go. Karl really wants to go. Karl would give away just about anything so that he could be happy and spend the night at Nick's apartment, and not have to think about anything else. Nick, who's always been flirty and forward, and kind and supportive. It's really convenient as well, Karl could still run to his apartment in the morning and get ready for work.

"I'm sorry," Karl said. "I have a-" he shook his head. "I have a very early morning tomorrow, and I'm too tired. Half a glass and I'd probably pass out before the bath."

"Okay," Nick answered kindly. He wasn't upset, he didn't try to guilt-trip Karl, he was understanding and accepting. "Offer's always open, you know where to find me."

Nick had been flirting with him since he moved in about 8 months ago. And he'd never stopped. Karl didn't want him to, he was quite happy to have Nick in his life even if it's just as a neighbor.

Most people date and they get married to people who aren't their soulmates because the Phantom Mirror- they're rarely ever a good way to find your soulmate. People ever rarely do find them in the first place.

But Karl's soulmate was an issue. At least to Karl, it was, considering how obvious it was that they were involved in something bad or in a bad situation.

And Karl really doesn't want Nick to have to deal with that.

"Yeah, I do," Karl replied.

"Well then, have a good night Dr. Jacobs," Nick smiled.

"Good night Nick," Karl said back before they went into their separate apartments.

Karl took a long shower washing off all the grime and absolute filth off his skin and his hair. His legs were sore from standing up for about 10 hours straight, and he didn't even feel about how exhausted it was.

Walking around with a towel wrapped around his waist, he brushed his teeth and washed his face. The mirror in front of him showed him everything he didn't like about the Phantom mirror. Although the world could barely even see it, being shades lighter and more invisible than actual scars, he could.

Karl could see it a little too clearly.

Neck, shoulder, his side. Scratches on his cheeks have faded away, but he knew they were there, once upon a time. Road burns on his left shoulder blade from a few weeks ago that he couldn't even begin to understand how his soulmate had gotten it.

He quickly shuts his tap off, throwing on his boxers and a shirt before climbing into bed, dreading the fact that he would have to be up in six hours. Karl closed his eyes and tried to sleep.

His day is finally over.

Not.

Karl has a list of phone numbers in his phone that will always come through in case of emergencies, regardless of do not disturb. He didn't remember when exactly, it was a few months ago after an incident with a fire-alarm that won't shut off, but amongst all his colleagues and immediate family, Nick was a part of his priority contacts.

Bleary-eyed and yawning, Karl threw his legs off the bed and stumbled up. He picked up the phone to answer.

"Karl?" Nick's voice was panicked.

"Hey," Karl replied. "What's up? Did you get locked out or something?"

"Karl, Karl-" Nick gulped. "I need your help, I need-" He was shaky and stuttered, Karl's attention was immediately grabbed and he was now very awake.

"Hey, hey- what's wrong?" Karl got up from his bed and placed the phone on speaker, jumping into action as he got himself into proper clothes, knowing that he would need to leave his apartment very soon.

"Uhm- I-" Nick cleared his throat. "My brother got hurt. Bad. I need you, I need-"

"Did you call 911? Tell me where you are, I can get an ambula-" Karl was already halfway out the door.

"No hospitals-" Nick said.

"Nick, if he's badly injured there is only so much I can do without equipment and help-" Karl explained.

"Well get help then," Nick said.

"I'm getting you an ambulance," Karl replied.

"We can't go to the hospital, he's gonna kill me!" Nick yelled.

Karl had to physically stop in his steps. He'd never heard that tone from Nick before and the implication behind his words was even worse.

"*Who's* gonna kill you?" Karl asked.

"Please, I can't let him die," Nick begged.

A thousand thoughts went through his brain that amidst the panic, Karl hadn't even realized his right upper forearm was bleeding continuously. He made a decision, right there and then. What else was he gonna do?

"Send me your location," Karl said.

After hanging up the phone, Karl sat in his car and sent off two very important messages. Sure he sped out of the parking garage, and he probably blew through a few stoplights but it was 3 AM and there was an emergency.

When he pulled up to the location, he found himself at some warehouse location close to the shipyard. He would've feared for his life if he hadn't seen Nick rushing over to him.

"Karl, I-"

His neighbor was drenched in blood, his sweatshirt dark red, and fingertips stained. Face absolutely shaken and mortified.

"You're bleeding," Karl exclaimed.

"They're not all my blood," Nick answered.

Karl's eyes still fell on his body though, more specifically the cut on Nick's left upper forearm.

Shivers went down his spine and his heart stopped and dropped to his stomach. The breath was shot out of his lungs and his world crashed.

His entire world came crashing down.

"You-" Karl gasped, hyperventilating as he walked backward and hit his own car.

"Please," Nick begged. "My brother needs you."

Working your entire life in one of the most stressful lines of work will give you some talents, amongst which was the ability to very specifically section out your problems. Karl tried his best and regulated his breathing, before nodding as if nothing has happened.

He was seething though, filled to the brim with rage and heartache, but still, Karl followed after Nick who ran back into the warehouse.

Karl could hear screaming, someone was screaming in pain. The voice was oddly familiar, though Karl had no time to dwell on it.

"Sapnap, who the *fuck* is that?" A man yelled out, his hands were steady on top of a man writhing on the table. He was pressing down on the bleeding wound, Karl was glad to have figured it out. "We said no *hospitals!*"

"He's not hospital, he's a friend," Nick yelled back. *Sapnap? Sapnap yelled back?* "Dream is dying."

"Oh, Phil's so going to kill you," The stark contrast of a British accent hits Karl's ears and his eye went straight to a particularly tall man standing a little off to the side. "We said no *more-*"

"He's gonna kill us if Dream dies you absolute asshole," Sapnap hissed back.

"Phil said don't go to the hospital," Wilbur said. "He knew people would be camping out at the hospital to get to us, Callahan shouldn't have even gone in the first-"

Callahan.

Callahan?

"Oh, you were going to let Cal die then?" Sapnap accused darkly. "That's it, you don't give a shit, Wilbur. You don't give a shit at all- he got shot! In the chest! Fucking, blame Dream for wanting to see if he was alive."

"Yeah! And someone followed Dream home and shot him in his house," Wilbur yelled back. "Exactly like Phil said they would."

Karl reached the table and finally recognized the man on the table, though maybe only the top half of his face.

"Clay," Karl whispered.

The room froze and turned to Karl.

"Why does he know him?" Another different voice chimed in. "How does he know Dream?"

"Sapnap you're is so mu-" Wilbur started.

"Shut up, shut up-" Karl yelled immediately. "You all shut up, this is *my O.R.* now, you shut up or get out."

Karl looked at the five people in the room. Wilbur, standing eyes wide, arms crossed but visibly uncomfortable and nervous. Nick, still in a combination of panic and anger. There was the guy still on top of Dream, strangely calm at the amount of blood covering his hands. Then there was the other guy still a little bit shadows. Lastly was his patient, hurting and bleeding out, unknown to Karl how severe his injuries were.

No one said anything back.

"Good," Karl replied. "What are your names?"

This was met with more silence of hesitation.

"Wilbur, Quackity, Skeppy," Nick answered for them, pointing at the tall man, the man on the table, and the man in the shadows. Wilbur scoffed, wanting to object but the damage is done.

"Right," Karl nodded. "Quackity, you're gonna need to stay there and hold on a little longer, you're doing a good job, you're stopping his bleeding until more help comes." Quackity simply nodded.

"*More* help?" Wilbur exclaimed.

"You gonna be useful or you gonna criticize me?" Karl snapped back. "I need another table for my equipment and more light if possible."

"Fine," Wilbur said.

"Skeppy, right?" Karl asked. "My friends are coming, if you could just walk outside and wait for them, that'll be great."

"Okay," Skeppy nodded before running off.

"Nick-" Karl said. "Sapnap?"

"Either is fine, Karl," He replied.

"Clay? Dream. We're going to take good care of you okay? We just need you to stay awake," Karl reassured as sanitized his hands before putting on his gloves. He looked back at Sapnap. "You wanna tell me what happened?"

"Someone broke into his house and shot him," Sapnap replied. "I don't- He got on the phone and called me, me and Q went to get him and we brought him here."

"Did he lose a lot of blood during transport?" Karl asked. "One bullet to the upper torso-"

"And knife," Quackity answered, Karl looking up to him. "He got shanked before they shot him."

"You can help him though, right?" Sapnap asked hopefully.

One of the rules about being a doctor is that you don't make promises you can't keep. And Karl hates that he couldn't make any gauge as the situation right now.

"How much blood did he lose?" Karl repeated his question, not answering Sapnap's previous one.

"A bit," Sapnap said. "I mean a lot, a lot actually."

"What's his blood type?" Karl asked, shining a light up to Dream's glazed eyes.

"B negative," Sapnap replied.

"Fuck," Karl said. "Anyone you know has the same blood type?" Sapnap shook his head. "I'm O positive."

"Can't you get like blood-" Sapnap asked.

"No I'm already asking my friends to steal meds from the hospital," Karl said darkly. "You're lucky, you're really lucky though- I think Punz is B neg."

"Who-" Quackity said. "Never mind."

"I got your table," Wilbur said as he dragged over a white plastic table. "Sapnap help me set up the lights."

"Get my bag on it, there's a cloth in there, lay it down, and pour everything out," Karl gently nudged the black bag with his foot. "Clay? Dream-" Karl called. "It's going to hurt for a little bit, I'm gonna have to check your wounds alright, stay with me."

Karl made eye contact with Quackity, nodding very slowly as Q started to move his hand away so Karl could have a clearer view. Just as Quackity removed his hand, Karl heard the door open.

"They're here," Skeppy called out.

Karl finished his initial examination before turning to look at his friends. George was there, wearing a dark oversized hoodie, carrying a bagful of what Karl assumed to be what he'd asked for. Behind him, however, was not Punz. Technoblade had entered the room.

"I said Punz!" Karl yelled immediately.

"Punz wasn't available," George said back. "And you asked for a Doomsday kit, I got someone who'd know how to deal with it."

"A Doomsday kit," Techno repeated. "At 4 AM on a random Tues-"

Techno stopped, both his words and his steps. Karl watched his face twist in anger and complete disgust, eyes fixated on not him, not the patient, but the tallest man in the room.

"Karl, what the *fuck* did you do?" Techno growled. "What the hell did you get yourself into?"

"Techno," Wilbur greeted.

"Karl, how did you get involved with the Watson crime family?" Techno was furious, to say the least.

"Techno, I don't have time for this, we have a patient," Karl said.

"I'm not doing this," Techno shook his head slowly walking backward, face scrunched in hatred, eyes still glaring at a nonchalant Wilbur.

"Tech-" Karl called.

"It's fine, Karl, I got this-" George stepped up. "Thanks for driving me here Techno."

"Your friend's bleeding," Quackity whispered. "Why is your friend bleeding?"

Karl was taken by shock, looking at Quackity before going back to George. Everything was too frantic to realize the reason George's hoodie flowed very weirdly was that it was soaked for half of the time.

"George, lift up your hoodie," Karl requested.

"It's fine, it's not a big deal Karl," George said. "I'm not bleeding."

"You're bleeding alright, I know blood when I see blood," Quackity chimed in.

"It's not that kind of blood," George said. "And it's not like I haven't done this before."

Not that kind of blood.

"George now!" Karl yelled.

"Fine!" George lifted up his shirt to blood dripping down his torso.

A hole on his upper torso, and a slice of a knife in the mid-abdomen. Karl turned back to Dream, still on the table, glancing down at his injuries. He shared a shocking look with Quackity. Shocked doesn't even begin to describe it, this was far too much for one day, far too much.

"Nick, get him out of here," Karl commanded.

"What?" Both Sapnap and George mumbled.

"Get George out of here," Karl said even more sternly. "Techno, I need you to stay." Techno was

already halfway out of the warehouse, only stopping when he heard the commotion. "George can't work."

"Karl!" George yelled. "It's nothing, we've done this before, I'm not actually-"

"Sapnap," Karl said, his voice more dangerous than ever. "Get George out of here, now."

Sapnap moved away from the table and attempted to usher George out though the plastic surgeon was not going to leave without a fight. He was walking towards the table when Sapnap body-blocked him.

"What, you got one guy who wants to work but can't-" Techno exclaimed. "And I don't wanna be here, but you need me?"

"Techno," Karl was panting. "First-"

He didn't need to finish the sentence. The oath stands for itself.

"He needs to leave-" Techno was already walking back towards the table, putting his hair up.

"I'm trying to get him to leave," Sapnap was still struggling against a very defiant George.

"Why the fuck can't I work? You called me," George said.

"George needs to leave too, but I was talking about Wilbur," Techno said, taking off his jacket and getting to the other side of the table. "He needs to leave."

"Oh, you fucker-" Wilbur scoffed.

"My O.R. my rules," Techno said. "I'm not working if you're here."

"Wilbur, help Sapnap take George out of here," Karl said to the tall gentleman.

Wilbur clenched his jaw, wanting to contest but really, unable to do much about it, before going to help take George out of the warehouse.

"Get off of me," George threw Wilbur's hand off before he could even touch him. "Karl."

"George you know the rules," Karl explained. "You can't work on family," George's eyebrows furrowed in confusion. "Or anyone important."

George's body went slack, but Karl had already turned back to work ongoing to deal with his bleeding patient.

"Is he-" George stuttered. "He's my-"

"Get him out, please," Karl said loudly. "I won't ask another time!"

As much as Karl hates the thought of his friend being manhandled by- *god*, by members of the mafia, it needed to be done.

"Stick me," Techno held up a needle in front of Karl. Karl didn't even need to ask the question before Techno answered. "O neg, remember?"

The blood god, such a vain and narcissistic nickname as it was, in many ways were not unfounded or undeserved. Techno was good at his job, and he knew steps ahead of what needed to be done. It was poetic really, more so than a coincidence that the blood god was a universal donor.

Four hours.

Karl was going to have to explain to everyone- the board, the rest of their colleagues, their patients- how three of their doctors, their surgeons, were four hours late to work.

And they weren't even at work yet.

It was 10 AM when Techno and Karl finally wrapped up, doing their best with Quackity and Skeppy as their pseudo-nurses helping them out.

Dream was asleep by then, having been sedated a while ago just before Techno started roaming in his body cavity.

There was no beginning to think about the consequences that they might be facing. Not the equipment they stole out of their hospital, the drugs they stole from the coded cabinets, that Techno probably had to use his logins to get. Not the unexplainable anything, really.

They'd cleaned most of their equipment though there were nowhere even close to being sanitized, before packing them away. They're going to leave all the bloody towels, rags, and everything else for these other guys to deal with, they just can't be bothered.

"N-" Karl sighed. "Sapnap has my number. Make sure he takes his meds. If he has an infection. if he has *a fever*- and that's important. Fever. You call me."

"Understood," Quackity nodded. "Thank you, Karl."

Karl nodded silently before leaving with Techno by his side. Just outside of the warehouse was Sapnap and Wilbur who they were very quickly approaching.

"Tech-" Karl said.

"I know," Techno said. "Don't say anything, I don't wanna know."

"Thank you," Karl continued regardless and Techno simply nodded.

"How is he?" Sapnap asked as they approached them.

"Alive," Karl told him.

Karl hates the fact that he felt so much joy, not out of the fact that he'd done a kick-ass job at a sketchy ass surgery and saved someone's life albeit at 4 AM, but more so at Sapnap's relieved

laughter.

"Thank you," Sapnap said.

"If this traces back to me-" Techno said, glare searing down into Wilbur's soul. "I will fuckin-"

"What?" Wilbur shot back.

Technoblade is a scary man, as most cardio surgeons are. He was tall with an intense gaze, unmatched reputation, and nerves of steel that he had to develop long when he first started. But Wilbur. Wilbur was unfazed.

"You gonna hurt me?" Wilbur taunted. "You gonna *kill* me?"

"Fuck you," Techno spat.

"Fuck you back," Wilbur replied. "I'll tell Phil you said hi."

Techno scoffed before walking away, getting into his car, and driving away. Wilbur only stayed long enough to watch the car disappear before leaving Sapnap and Karl alone in the parking.

"Your friend George left, uhm-" Sapnap began to explain. "If he wasn't any help here, he said should go to work." Karl only nodded to indicate that he understood. "Your friend Punz picked him up and said they would cover for you today, so you could go home."

Karl only continued to nod, his body unsure about how to react with the past 24 hours. Even less actually, the amount mind breaking information that he's gotten in the past 12 hours alone was going to kill him.

Karl couldn't even look at Sapnap on the face. He wasn't Nick, the hot neighbor that sometimes watched movies with him on the weekends or buys his food sometimes when he knows Karl has a big trauma, the one that helped him build his IKEA coffee table and failed miserably.

"Karl," Sapnap called.

Sapnap was-

"Watson crime family?" Karl wasn't even aware that his voice could crack the way it did. "Really?"

"Look," Sapnap mumbled. "I'm sorry, I'm-"

"Sorry?" Karl scoffed. "Sor- How long have you known?"

Karl could see Sapnap physically take a step back, breath caught in his throat in sheer shock.

"How long have you known?" Karl asked yet again. "How long sin- I told you. Everything, a lot of things. You knew how I felt after every trauma, you knew how I felt about the Phantom mirror, you knew-"

Karl was panting, he was expelling more than just emotion and heartbreak into the air this morning. He was tired, tired, and hurt.

"The fate of my hospital- the money that got crashed because the Watson crime family had murdered one of our donors, I told you that, weeks ago. And our funding is getting cut next month, and I don't even care-"

Karl could not stop himself even if he tried.

"I don't even care about the funding or budget, you knew how much I worked to save every patient that I've lost on the table because of you? Because of you?" His accusatory tone was like a blade stabbed through Sapnap's heart. "So how long?" Karl demanded. "How long have you known that I was your-"

The air fell still.

Sapnap was clenching his jaw, not so much out of anger but more so for just- sadness, knowing things were going to come to an end in mere seconds. But he couldn't lie to Karl, not anymore, not now.

"The second week after I moved in," Sapnap said.

"Oh my god," Karl gasped, all the repressed anger he'd kept before the surgery can spilling to the surface. "Don't ever talk to me again, Nick. Ever."

Karl got into his car and immediately drove away, not letting Sapnap get a single word into the conversation.

Karl walked back into the hospital after an 18-hour sleep the day after his 4 AM surgery. He was still emotionally spent but surgeons hardly get their days off just because they're sad.

He was thankful he hadn't seen Sapnap at all, or even heard from him. Not a phone call or a text, which is also very good news for Dream, not a single sound from across the hallway.

He wasn't going to think about him. That was the end of it.

Until of course, Karl Jacobs saw the name on the chart he has to go rounds for. Sure he could ask someone to trade with him or help him take one patient, just one patient off his rotation. But Karl Jacobs was a professional and he would like to remain a professional.

"Good morning Mr. Watson, how are you doing today?" Karl asked kindly as he walked into his patient's room.

George had texted Karl and was very pleased to inform him that Callahan had woken up yesterday when he wasn't there, not even thinking about what 'him being Dream's brother' meant.

Callahan looked a lot better, not like he was shot in the chest two days later. It wasn't even a question anymore if he was the target, of course, he was. The silent patient, however, only shook his head.

"No?" Karl guessed. "You're not feeling good?"

Callahan continued to shake his head but this time pointing at his chest before pointing at Karl's chest. Karl looked down and saw his own name tag, somehow immediately understanding what he meant.

"Your last name isn't Watson?" Karl asked and Callahan nodded. "Right. Did they not give you a

whiteboard? Or you could type on your phone? Or is it all still hard to move around?" Callahan nodded yet again. "I'll get you better accommodations, but for the time being, any chest pains?"

Callahan shook his head.

He looked harmless. Like he couldn't hurt a fly even if he wanted to. Then again, so did Nick.

Sapnap. Nick doesn't exist.

Karl's little tangent in his mind was brought back by a steady increase of beeping. Being a cardio patient of course meant that Callahan was being plugged into a heart monitor and boy, his heartbeat was rising.

"Hey, hey, what's wrong?" Karl rushed to his bedside, looking at a wide-eyed Callahan, staring out his door.

Karl turned to look only to find the two detectives that he's talked to two days ago when the shooting had occurred. Karl sighed and gently patted Callahan's hand.

"I got it, I got it," Karl said before going out of his room. "Gentlemen, how may I be of any help today?"

"We just wanted to ask your patient some questions, we believe the shooting is a result of the ongoing turf war between the two crime families of the Southside," The detective said.

"Your patient may know more than he's leading people to believe," The second detective said.

"Oh come on," Karl said softly. "He's harmless, he's a nice guy who probably just caught in the crossfire. Listen-" Karl could act when he chooses to. "My patient was gravely injured, and he needs a rest. He needs to recover. He's also non-verbal and doesn't currently have full mobility of his hands so I doubt you're going to get any important information out of him."

"Chief Jacobs-" The second detective attempted to interject though Karl didn't give him a chance.

"You can talk to him in a few more days once we get a translator down and he's a little better," Karl said. "Now go, you're disturbing my patients."

Karl was mildly impressed at his own persuasion skills, watching as the two detectives begrudgingly left the floor. He sighed and walked back into Callahan's room.

"You didn't kill anyone right?" Karl asked, and Callahan shook his head. "Have you ever killed anyone?" Callahan grimaced and shrugged. "Of course."

Callahan just gave him a smile, kind and genuine.

"Your brother's alive by the way," Karl said, glancing at the phone on his nightstand. "I don't know if they told you or-" Callahan nodded enthusiastically with a smile. "Are they actually your brothers or is that like a weird Watson thing?" Karl couldn't help himself.

Callahan held up two fingers.

"The second one?" Karl reaffirmed and Callahan nodded. "Your brother Nick is an asshole, by the way, thought you should know."

Callahan chuckled, straining to raise a flat hand to his lips and moving it down and forward towards Karl with a smile. In Karl's however many years of experience in the hospital, he can understand a thank you when he sees one.

"Yeah," Karl replied, a little uncomfortable to say you're welcome but wanted to acknowledge it. "I'm getting you that whiteboard so we can talk."

Callahan simply smiled kindly at Karl before waving him off as Karl left.

Karl didn't even manage to get further than the West Wing of the third floor when he was paged to the front door. He could only let out a deep sigh before turning around and making his way towards the lobby.

"This is so cool," Karl heard Sam exclaimed, looking over the paper in his hand. "Karl. We're

getting the da Vinci!" He yelled gleefully.

"We're getting 5 more incubators and a new ultrasound," Bad said. "Karl, this is so much money."

"We're getting new electronic boards for patient tracking," Punz mumbled slowly. "Workstations on every ER bed, this is fucking awesome."

"A LODOX?" Foolish exclaimed. "Ant we're getting a LODOX!"

"No way," Ant gushed as he read out the name of the equipment on the paper. "Low-dose radiation x-ray stat-scanner, model 2.7 year 202-"

"What's happening?" Karl asked as he approached his colleagues all crowded around the lobby.

"The board just dropped this off," Techno said, handing Karl a sheet of paper. "Said we just got mysterious, semi-anonymous funding, and we're getting new equipment and upgrades."

Karl scanned through the paper, seeing the da Vinci robot that Sam was so excited about, an extra 5 new ER bed, a heart surgery robot along with new OR tables, and a number of other machines.

"Everybody, go back to work," Karl said. "Take your excitement and go tend to your patients."

"Karl this is so cool, thank you, thank you-" Foolish said before running off, still reading down the list he had. Sam and Bad already discussing the possible surgeries they could do, while Ant was explaining the LODOX to Punz in more depth.

Soon it was only Techno and Karl in the lobby.

"What the hell is this?" Karl said. "This is so much money."

"Yeah," Techno agreed. "You know who has this kind of money?" He asked rhetorically. Karl simply inhaled as a response. "Yeah. And I think saving, not one but two of his caporegime's lives will make a Don do favors for you."

"I didn't ask for this Techno," Karl said. "I didn't even know that Nick was-"

"I'm just hoping that this money, all this-" Techno waved his paper around. "Is him getting even and not wanting to owe anyone anything, and *not* the start of a *beautiful friendship*," He said sarcastically.

Techno walked away without another word.

Karl stood silently, staring down at his paper when George walked up to him.

"I heard about the money and everything," George said. "Sam won't shut up about the da Vinci," He joked.

"Yeah," Karl said. "It's from them, or at least Techno thinks it is."

"Hm," George hummed softly. "And the flowers?"

Karl hasn't even noticed the two rather large and grand arrangements of flowers at the front desk. One was filled with white and purple flowers, a little pastel green notecard at the front of it, and the second vase held the most vibrant blue bouquet.

George was holding the flowers, moving them slightly with a smile on his face, completely ignorant to the card that held his name on it.

"Us, apparently," Karl informed him, pointing at the plain white greeting card with a very neatly written *George*.

George immediately stopped touching the flowers, face turning sour almost immediately.

"You know when I-" George said. "When I got here yesterday and I went through all my patients and did two flawless surgeries, I almost forgot," George said bitterly. "I almost forgot that my soulmate is an asshole."

Karl took the card seeing his first name written in a handwriting that he hates to admit he'd very

familiar with, before putting it in his pocket without reading it.

"God, I almost forgot about him," George whined. "And now, I don't know if it's luck or fate, or that they know- he. If he knows," George corrected himself. "And I don't know which one is worse really. But he's sending blue flowers?"

There wasn't enough pity in the entire hospital for the two surgeons, standing there side by side, looking at the most gorgeous and lavish presents they will probably ever get but despising it with their whole body. How much purple and blue brought joy into Karl and George was an unfair advantage.

"We made an oath," Karl chuckled bitterly. "Who would've guessed that our soulmates would be the people who break them?"

"Dream, you gotta-" Sapnap sighed. "Callahan literally just texted saying there were detectives inside this morning, we can't be here."

"It's fine," Dream said.

"You shouldn't even be out here," Sapnap said angrily. "You just had surgery."

"I'm fine, see," Dream said. "No fever, I can stand up."

The two men were sneaking around in the parking lot of the hospital. It was far later in the night, just in time for the attending to get off work. Which makes their position far riskier, in fact.

"Dream," Sapnap said even more sternly than before. "Wilbur's old enemy or frenemy or whatever just dug into your stomach yesterday."

"And your soulmate," Dream said pointedly. "And your soulmate," He repeated.

"You are weak, you need to be home-"

"You get to see them," Dream said. "I get to see them."

Sapnap had a little stare-off with his brother-in-arms, the brother that he'd been so scared of losing the day before that he'd risk- that's he had jeopardized his relationship with his soulmate. Still, he can't even blame Dream for the implosion that is his relationship with Karl.

"Fine," Sapnap conceded.

"Which one is he?" Dream asked.

Sapnap waited, knowing Karl usually leaves within a few minutes of the end of his shift. And when he saw the two surgeons walk through the doors he tapped Dream slowly and nudged towards them.

"Karl is on the left, the one holding the car keys," Sapnap said, though his heart ached. "Your soulmate, George, is the one on the right."

Sapnap watched Dream's face shifted, mouth silently agape as he gulped, his breathing slow but prominent. To say that Dream was captivated was an understatement.

"Fuck," Dream sighed.

"Yep," Sapnap said.

"Fuck," Dream cursed again. "He's so-"

"I know," Sapnap said.

The two of them watched silently as their soulmates got into the car and drove away. Only then did they get back into their car, sitting silently in their static car.

"We know the rules. We have rules," Dream said, more of a statement to remind himself than anything else.

"No soulmates," Sapnap answered.

Silence fell between them in the car. Neither of them was looking at each other, staring straight out the windshield to gather their thought and contemplate their decisions. Do they even have a decision to make? For them, knowing their line of work, it might as well be life or death.

"We're fucked aren't we?" Dream asked.

"Yep," Sapnap replied.

"Cool," Dream said.

"Cool."

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

long overdue second chapter, thank you for all the support, i appreciate it greatly.

this took a while to write out bcs i was having a bit of problem plotting it out and I'm still figuring it out but i kinda have a bit of a general idea now.

hope you guys enjoy this!! (i hope 9k something words will make up for it)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Rules," One word, but the sound itself was enough to send a cold chill down Sapnap's spine. "We have rules."

It was naive of Sapnap to have thought that he'd gotten away with it. Granted, it was a good few days before he'd gotten called into a not-so-discrete meeting with the Don that he nearly forgot that he had something to worry about. Of course, he was also wishing that everyone would've just forgotten.

He could only be so lucky.

"We don't have a lot of rules," Phil said, his voice dangerously patient. "But they're important rules."

"Yes sir," Sapnap cleared his throat.

He glanced around the very dark room. There were five people in the room. There was Phil, sitting behind his desk, not even looking at Sapnap. His words lazy and mumbled like he couldn't be bothered to give this the time of day, eyes focused on the scattering of files on his desk, reading the words and number from behind his glasses.

Next to him was Eret, the person that brought all the papers in and simply waiting for Phil to finish up so they could continue with their work. Across from them, sitting on the chair on the other side of the desk, was Fundy on a laptop. His screen black with only green-white code like ones you'd see in movies. Though if Sapnap were told that Fundy was only queueing up his Netflix movies, he wouldn't be surprised.

Lastly, but certainly not least, was Wilbur, leaning against the wall at the corner, hidden almost entirely by shadows, looking over the room and having a pissy contest with Sapnap. Now, who else but the Don's son to go and rat him out about inviting an outsider into their warehouse.

"You know the rules, Sapnap," Phil said darkly. "We were very clear about it when you joined."

"I know sir, I understood them," Sapnap assured him.

"Understood as in past tense?" Phil mused, his hand signing over some papers that Eret had prepared. "Because it seems that somewhere along the way you must have forgotten."

"Understand, I understand," Sapnap corrected himself. "It was an emergency, and he was- he's a friend and-"

"And neighbor," Phil said. "Your neighbor, friend, doctor-" He finally stopped and looked up to meet Sapnap's eyes. "-*soulmate*."

Sapnap's heart was beating very fast and very hard. Chewing on the insides of his cheek, he glared over at Wilbur, who simply stared intensely back at him.

"After what happened to Callahan, I'd-" Sapnap said. "I couldn't let the same thing happen to Dream, he would've died."

"I understand," Phil said. "I'm not angry you saved Dream, I mean-" Phil chuckled. "Saved me from having to find another Tactical Strategist, never mind someone as good as Dream, thank you for that."

Sapnap let himself a relief little laugh along with Phil.

"Though there are multiple rules you broke," And the tension fell back in the room. "How many rules again Wilbur?" Phil asked.

"Revealing your job to strangers. Outsiders in our property, not to mention multiple of them. Undeclared attachments and relationships," Wilbur listed and Sapnap rolled his eyes. "Soulmate."

"Right," Phil hummed. "I guess the job reveal isn't really your fault, I hear an old friend came and

basically ousted us, so-" He glanced at Wilbur. "I don't think it's fair to blame Sapnap for you know, something someone else did. Do you?"

"No," Wilbur mumbled begrudgingly. "I guess not."

"Outsiders in our property," Phil continued. "I mean. Some of them were necessary," He admitted, nodded. "Dream pulled through, though how he got to that position is a thing that he and I will have to discuss once he gets better."

"Right," Sapnap mumbled.

"However, it was your friend, and our old friend that saved Dream," Phil said. "There was that extra issue with uh- Dream's friend, and I heard a fourth one that came and got him."

"I-" Sapnap said.

"Now I'm not unreasonable," Phil said. "Some of these things- Well you could never have predicted it, could you?"

"N-no sir," Sapnap replied.

Phil was amicable. Always has been, he's not the overly brazen type, yelling with guns and knives flying out and about, but then again, that's what made him scarier. How he got into the position he's in right now, the number of people ready to follow him blindly through the numerous almost incalculable amount of illegal operation- Impressive isn't even enough to describe him.

"But that's why we have precautions, yes?" Phil questioned. "Rules like declare your relationships so that we can take control and gauge just about how much danger we would be in, you know, instead of paying them millions of dollars in the blind hope that they would not rat us out?"

"They-" Sapnap said. "He appreciates the donation and-"

"Don't care," Phil hummed. "Of course he would. Come on now- Millions," He scoffed a little bitterly. "Waste of good money."

"It's a hospital, they help people and-" Sapnap started but immediately stop at Phil's single hand raise.

"Yeah, yeah, hospital helps people, okay," Phil rolled his eyes. "But, not declaring a relationship to us cost us that money, so-" He pursed his lips. "You want to declare a relationship."

"There-" Sapnap exhaled softly, regaining his calmness. "There is no relationship to declare. He's a neighbor."

"Good," Phil said. "Because you know the rules against pursuing relationships with soulmates," Phil stated. "It's risky, dangerous. Wonderful weak spot for our enemies to come and hit you. Liabilities. Hostages."

"Yes, yes, I understand-" Sapnap nodded.

"Right," Phil said. "So, you how long have you known?"

Sapnap inhaled a sharp breath and did a quick glance at Wilbur before looking back at Phil.

"That night," Sapnap said.

"Okay," Phil nodded. "Understandable. And you don't intend to pursue that relationship with your soulmate, do you?"

"No, sir," Sapnap replied

"Oh, come on, he's clearly lying," Wilbur scoffed.

"Wil," Phil warned, turning to Wilbur having a staring contest with Sapnap. "We don't call our friends liars. We believe them, and we hold their words to it," Phil turned back to Sapnap. "Isn't that right?"

"Yes," Sapnap replied curtly after tearing his eyes off Wilbur.

"Good," Phil smiled. "Now you know what happens when you break rules Sapnap."

"Yes, sir."

Talking with Phil has always been a mostly yes or no situation, and usually, it's not hard. But never has single-word replies been even harder to say especially when you know they're complete lies. For starters, no, he actually doesn't know what happens to people who break the rules. No one does. It's bad and no one is around to tell the story.

"You will be moving out then?" Phil questioned. "I would assume you won't want to be in close proximity of something you cannot have."

"Right," Sapnap was lying through the skin of his teeth. "Of course."

"Go on then," Phil said. "You're dismissed."

Sapnap nodded before walking out of the room.

He was already down the hallway when he heard the door from where he'd just come from open and close again. He'd expected it, really, and he was exactly in the mood for some trouble.

"Don't make me punch your teeth out, Wilbur," Sapnap said even before the taller gentleman could even approach him.

"Just because Phil is willing to let you off doesn't mean I can't see through all your bullshit Sapnap," Wilbur replied. "You're not going to pursue a relationship? You only know about your soulmate the night Dream got shot? Is lying to him enough or do you wanna lie to my face too?"

"I didn't realize you were such a snitch," Sapnap said flatly.

"I am protecting this family," Wilbur assured. "You're being reckless and stupid, and you're going to get us int-"

"You're being a dick," Sapnap said. "I'm not fucking stupid, I know the rules and the people. I know *him*."

"You know the rules huh?" Wilbur said cockily. "You wanna tell me where you're going to right now?"

"Fuck off Wil," Sapnap shook his head, a smirk of anger and disbelief on his face. "You're not protecting anyone, you're not worried, or thinking ahead. You're over-compensating because you don't want daddy to know that you got Callahan into the hospital."

Wilbur looked away, his jaw clenched. Sapnap knew exactly how to hit a nerve. Working with someone long enough will give you enough ammo to take them down a peg. Especially if you were there for their failures.

"You wanna tell daddy that you were unable to come to an agreement and well," Sapnap dramatically winced. "Failed to do your job," He took joy at how angry Wilbur is right now. "So much so that they came after us?"

Sapnap had every right to be angry. The things he'd almost lost or already lost- He deserved to be angry.

"This isn't a fight you wanna have with me, Wil," Sapnap said, before turning to walk away.

"You tell Dream and Quackity to fall in line too or I'll have all of you in slabs," Wilbur sent one last threat but Sapnap was already on the other side of the door.

"I don't like this," Karl mumbled. "Techno, I don't like this at all."

"Is it too late to say I told you so?" Techno mumbled sarcastically.

"I said I didn't know," Karl sighed.

The two doctors stood to the sidelines, watching as a bunch of men with little heavyweight movers attempt to navigate the parts of a 5' by 14' by 7' chunk of an x-ray into the ER.

"How was I going to know the LODOX would be too big for the emergency room?" Karl huffed

"You should've known when I told you," Techno said.

The time was 6 AM in the morning, and they'd moved the patients out of the ER for this installation to begin. The machine was a beast, but such are presents from the Watson crime family.

"I didn't know you knew the dimensions of the empty room," Karl exclaimed.

"Well get a goddamn tape measure and ask an intern to go do you a favor," Techno said, waving his hand towards the movers.

"I don't like that," Karl said again. "Look! They can't even pivot."

Techno turned to look at the movers and technicians struggle to turn the bed around to properly assemble the machine. It looked a little ridiculous.

"Okay then, let them figure that out and turn away," Techno said.

"Should I feel guilty?" Karl asked softly after a moment of silence. "I mean- I was guilty a week ago but then I saw the da Vinci."

"Has Sam even gone home yet?" Techno joked. "I think he's been in the lab for three days now, playing with his new robot."

"And the LODOX is pretty cool," Karl added giddily. "Thirteen seconds?"

"Full body scan in 13 seconds," Techno nodded. "This is how it starts by the way."

"How what starts?" Karl asked.

"You hate him, you hate him, you hate him," Techno mumbled sarcastically. "But he gets you something that is mind-blowingly good, and so amazing, and you forget one percent of why you hate him."

"He didn't buy the machine for us," Karl said defensively. "He-"

"-is the only one who actually knows our financial trouble because you tell him everything over wine and dinner," Techno said. "Do you really think Watson is doing this himself? Out of pure intuition?"

"Fuck," Karl cursed.

"You hate him a little less, don't you?" Techno said knowingly.

"No!" Karl said defensively. "No- I still hate him. He lied to me."

"He didn't lie, he just didn't tell you-"

"Don't defend him," Karl slapped Techno's shoulder.

"What are we talking about here?" George's head popped up between the two of them and they jumped.

"Christ, George-" Karl jumped.

"Stealthy," Techno hummed. "Good when you're hiding away from the police with your Mafia soulmate."

"You're mean," George stared at Techno. "I'm going to steal your surgery."

"You touch my patient, I will hurt you," Techno said.

"Well thank god I have a Mafia boyfriend, right?" George sneered sarcastically and Techno only grinned. "So what are we talking about?"

"The LODOX won't fit, we might need to move it to another place," Karl pointed.

"Just remove the whole door," George said. "It's much faster to call maintenance to remove the door and let the LODOX through than try to move it to like, the third floor."

"Smart," Karl snapped his fingers, walking away to talk to the workers.

"We were actually talking about how when you get presents-" Techno said. "Big presents, fun presents, good presents- you hate them a little less and you start to forget."

George kept his eyes straight, looking at Karl talking to the movers and on his phone calling down the available maintenance. His grip, however, was tight around his own arms, lips pursed as he tapped his foot.

"I haven't forgotten," George said.

"I'm not going to blame you," Techno said. "I'm just saying, this is how it starts. God knows I'm not one to judge people for getting involved with the mafia, especially if you don't have a choice."

"We have a choice, the choice is we hate them," George said. "They-" George turned to Techno and lowered his voice. "They kill people."

"They're not assassins, George," Techno said. "They *have* killed, hurt, tortured- will probably again. But they're not *just* killers."

"You're not *actually* defending them Techno," George said critically.

"No," Techno shook his head, brandishing a cheeky smile on his face. "I'm just trying to make you feel better."

"I hate you," George muttered.

"He's still around?" Techno asked.

"Every day for the last 4 days," George said in annoyance. "Walking around like he wasn't just shanked, and shot, and butchered last week."

"Butchered?" Techno scoffed. "I'll have you know I did a fantastic job operating on him *while* giving him blood as well."

"Whatever," George said. "I've already said I don't wanna see him."

"Well *technically* he's here to watch Callahan, is he not?" Techno smirked.

"Yeah, but I'm not stupid Techno," George glared. "Karl's soulmate can stay away, why can't mine?" He complained.

"They're vastly different people," Techno said.

"Do you know him?" George asked. "Do you know- like I mean know-"

"George, I only know of them. Know their faces, know their jobs. As you can probably tell-" Techno said slowly. "I'm not their biggest fan. I don't tend to keep up with them and say hello."

"So my soulmate-" George continued as if Techno hadn't just said anything. "He- what is he?"

Techno stared flatly at the plastic surgeon who looked up expectantly at him. He rolled his eyes and sighed.

"Tactical strategist," Techno said. "Expansion and things like that."

"That doesn't sound so bad," George frowned.

"Until you remember it's an expansion for crime rings and monopolizing illegal transactions," Techno said.

"Ugh," George sneered. "How do you know so much about this anyway? Why do you-"

"Ah ah," Techno tutted. "We placed down rules. You can ask me things, you can talk to me about things, I keep your secrets, but you don't ask questions about me. We've been over this."

"Alright fine," George crossed his arms and pouted. Techno glanced over and shook his head. "Can I steal your surgery?"

"I already said no," Techno exclaimed playfully. "What do you want with a heart/liver transplant anyway?" George just blinked and Techno understood immediately. "Go do your goddamn rounds with the Watson guy." He pushed on George's shoulder, causing the shorter man to stumble to the side.

"Fine," George stomped his foot. "But you owe me one."

"Me?" Techno yelled out as George walked away. "I think you owe *me* one based on who has *my blood* right now." But George has disappeared into a corner.

"Can I steal your surgery?" Karl said as he walked back from talking to the movers.

"No!" Techno said. "Why does everyone want the heart/liver transplant?"

"Liver- liver," Karl gasped. "Me, me, I'm a general surgeon. You need me."

"I was gonna get the head of general surgery not the chief of *surgery*," Techno said pointedly. "What are you avoiding?"

"The police," Karl winced. "Niki just paged me saying the detectives are back."

"You'd think they'd get a warrant or something by now," Techno chuckled. "They've just been waiting for you to let them talk to Callahan?"

"Don't make Niki lie for me," Karl begged, ignoring Techno's comments.

"Okay, now that's not fair-" Techno said. "Don't bring Niki into this."

"Well, she's been covering for me so-" Karl grimaced.

"You know we haven't even done pre-op right?" Techno said. "Surgery isn't until another-" He checked his watch. "An hour, two?"

"Yes but *they* don't know that," Karl said hopefully. "Please?"

"Fine," Techno said. "You go talk to Gibson then, see how he likes the chief stealing his surgeries."

"Techno, you love me," Karl said teasingly. "Wouldn't you much rather work with me anyway?"

"I'm not saying anything," Techno stated as he began to walk away.

"Where did George go by the way?" Karl asked as he caught up and fell into step with Techno.

"Told him to go do handle rounds with the Watson guy," Techno said.

"Oh," Karl said, quickly checking his watch to find the clock had passed 6:30. "Oh, oh no."

"What do you mean *oh no*?" Techno turned.

"Uh-" Karl patted his body down for his phone, heads moving, looking around wildly. "Nothing. I uh- gotta go. Meet you in OR 2 later," Karl said as he started to run.

"It's OR 3," Techno called out. Karl only stuck a thumbs up into the air as he disappeared into a hallway.

The amount of illegal things that Karl has done this last week alone is honestly something of a record. Stealing medication from the cabinet, dodging the police using a number of wildly bullshit reasons, it's honestly never-ending and it really wasn't with fault. The doctor with a bleeding heart, come on, what was he supposed to do. Let people die when his neighbor asked to look at said people's injuries?

People. Right.

No, it's the mafia. They're the mafia.

"George," Karl nearly crashed into the nurse's station in an attempt to stop George. "What are you doing?"

George was standing by the station, 3 interns waiting patiently next to him as he read through one of the hospital's blue charts. George simply looked up and gave Karl a really weird look considering the chief just ran across the hospital.

"I mean it's about time for rounds," George said slowly. "I'm doing rounds."

"Is that-" Karl cleared his throat, somehow still trying to catch his breath from the running. "Is that the Watson guy's chart?"

"Yeah," George nodded. "Well Techno's been doing them this week and he just asked me to do it today, so I thought-"

"Oh yeah, no it's fine, I'll uh-" Karl reached out and tugged on the giant binder. "I'll take it off your

hands."

"He's not your patient," George replied though there wasn't a lot of restraint to keep the chart. "Me and Tech operated."

"Yeah," Karl's voice was high and you would've thought his best friend would know that's a sign that he was hiding something. "But I've been dealing with him since he woke up, and I think he's comfortable with me, plus I'm familiar with his chart so-" George finally let go and the chart was in Karl's arms now.

"I mean that's good by me," George shrugged. "One less patient for the day."

"Okay, bye," Karl said.

George gave him a weird look before walking further down the hall to another patient's room, the interns following closely behind. The second all four of them disappeared into the room, Karl exhaled a sigh of relief, gulping as he held the charts close to his chest.

Karl walked into Callahan's room without knocking even though the door was closed. In his defense, it's a hospital. Privacy is hardly a given choice since nurses and doctors need to have access to you at all times in case you know, you coded and die or something. But the room did have an extra curtain for privacy, which Karl also pulled open causing it to jingle, filling the previously silent room with noise.

Three people were asleep in the room. Three, despite the one-person occupancy of the room.

"God, I knew you guys would still be fucking asleep," Karl exclaimed softly as he dropped the chart onto the dresser with a loud thud. Karl walked towards the TV remote and turned it on, turned the volume a little bit louder both to wake the people in the room and drown their voices.

"Morning Doc," Quackity yawned as the other two began to stir awake.

Callahan blinked awake, looked around for a few seconds before deciding that he wanted more sleep, and closed his eyes again.

"I said six," Karl hissed. "Leave by six or people will catch you. George nearly did rounds, it's six-thirty. What happens if he finds you in here? You're not supposed to be in here."

"Maybe you should've let him," Dream mumbled as he stretched his arms up, turning around as his spine cracked. "He's been avoiding me."

"Oh gee, I wonder why," Karl said sarcastically.

"Oh come on, don't be like that," Dream pouted. "You like me, don't you doc?"

"I like him," Karl said brutally as he pointed at Callahan. "He's my patient and, my patient was alone and scared-"

"Callahan is alone and scared like he couldn't disassemble your X-Ray machines if you just give him a straw," Quackity muttered.

"Callahan is alone and scared like like he didn't jerry-rig a speedboat one time and set a yacht on fire," Dream added.

At about this point, Callahan's eyes snapped open and he took his pillow and chucked it at Quackity to hit him on the face. He threw a second pillow at Dream though the attack on Quackity gave him enough head up to catch the pillow with a grin on his face. Rats.

"Well he's lonely and he doesn't talk, so I let his shitty *brothers* sneak in to accompany him in the night, and that's it," Karl continued. "Which I'm starting to regret."

"Ouch," Quackity mumbled. "And here I thought you liked me."

"This really hurts, doc," Dream said dramatically, placing a hand over his chest.

"Oh, did you pull stitches or something?" Karl's eyes immediately grew concerned, walking closer to Dream.

"No?" Dream raised an eyebrow at Karl. "It's a joke."

"You can't put your hand over your chest and says it hurts in front of a surgeon that just stitched your bleeding body up in a warehouse, like less than a week ago," Karl scolded.

"Ah, memories," Dream hummed playfully. "I was joking. I may carry a gun, but I know how to joke doc."

"Did you-" Karl inhaled deeply, pushing down every single piece of rage and frustration bubbling in him. "Did you- Did you bring-" He couldn't even finish his sentence.

Dream and Quackity looked at each other, before fixing down their shirts and pants, not so effectively hiding their holsters and guns strapped to their back and ankles.

"I'm-" Karl was at a loss for words. "Unbelievable."

"We forgot," Quackity said defensively.

"There are detectives downstairs in the lobby," Karl stated. "I am seriously contemplating turning you in."

"I don't know why you keep thinking they're coming to get us," Quackity said. "If anything, we're the victims here. We've gotten attacked over and over again. I mean look at poor Callahan. He's being kept alive with tubes and machines, never to walk again, never to talk again-"

Callahan looked at Quackity with disgust before looking at Karl and rolling his eyes. Karl couldn't help but smile. He did, in fact, really like this patient.

"Five," Karl said. "Four, three-"

"Okay, okay!" Quackity exclaimed, throwing his jacket on.

"We're leaving, we're leaving," Dream declared as he too started to put on his jacket.

Dream walked over and gave Callahan his pillow back before ruffling his hair with a quick *love*

you, while Quackity gave him a soft little secret handshake type. Callahan was smiling when his brothers walked away. Quackity kept his head down and hurriedly exited the room and made his way to the emergency staircase, making sure no one saw him.

I mean a few people did, obviously. See, Karl knew the nurses were observant, to say the least, and they liked to gossip too, so he's already bribed them with a little bonus for the end of the year due to the money they've recently received. It's fine. Right?

"Wanna leave a message?" Dream asked as he hung back in the room looking at Karl.

No, Karl does not want to leave a message for his soulmate, who is in the mafia. Then again, Dream was also in the mafia. Karl just looked and Dream flatly and sighed.

"Okay," Dream shrugged. "I mean, I have to ask that every day you know. I'm practically obligated to."

"Goodbye Dream," Karl said.

"Can I leave a message?" Dream asked cheekily.

"No, you can't leave a message for George," Karl said out loud this time. "It's not like I don't see you lurking in the cafeteria- god, get out." He shoved Dream lightly on the shoulder.

"Alright, alright-" Dream had both his hands in the air for surrender though the man was still laughing. "See you around doc."

This man had the nerve to wink at him.

Karl watched as Dream, much cockier than Quackity, might he add, stroll down the hall towards the staircase as if the mask he was wearing would protect his identity. Karl made eye contact with Jesse, silently filling in the charts from the nurse station, who only shook their head and went back to work.

When Karl turned back to Callahan, the man had already had a full whiteboard of questions written out.

"Really?" Karl asked exasperatedly. "Okay, one by one."

The first question written out was simple. *When can I leave?*

"Cal, you just had heart surgery," Karl said patiently. "I snuck in your brothers so you wouldn't jump out of the window, give me a few more days."

The roll from Callahan's eyes and the sigh told Karl that Callahan was only mostly resigned at the situation. The second question was even shorter, but somehow more complicated to answer. *Police?*

"Working on it," Karl said. "I've been trying to dodge them, you'll be fine under my roof."

The next question had Karl smile a little. He really did like Callahan, just a little bit. *Do you like the toys?*

"They're not toys, they're very expensive equipment with high clas-" Karl started before immediately seeing Callahan pretend to fall asleep. "And I'm boring you," Callahan opened one eye and looked at Karl. "They're fine. Some of them are very complicated to install and the company doesn't have a technician in the city so it's really weird and complicated-" Karl rushed as to not bore Callahan even more. "It's whatever, you can tell your fat-" Callahan immediately shook his head. "Not your father- him, just, thank him for us. I guess," he mumbled.

The last question. Oh god. *Will you let Sarnap visit me?*

"I never-" Karl sighed. "I never said he wasn't allowed to visit you."

Karl felt kinda guilty. Just a little bit. Lord knows he shouldn't feel guilty, he already broke rules for this criminal family, such as sneaking in both Dream and Quackity but he still felt a little guilty. He knew Sarnap hasn't visited Callahan at all because of him. Callahan staring pointedly at him wasn't exactly helping with the guilt either.

"I never said-" He repeated. "I mean, he's allowed to, go ask Dream to sneak him in tonight, I won't be on call."

Karl watched as Callahan took a marker and wrote down '*Boundaries*' before circling it multiple times.

"Alright," Karl said. "You want to hear it from me, alright-" He sighed. "As long as I'm not being bothered or forced to interact. He can come to visit you, I don't mind."

Watching Callahan grin brought a little bit of joy to him. Sometimes he has to believe that maybe not everyone in the Watson Crime family is absolute trash. I mean, Callahan is nice enough.

Though, thinking about that made it feel a little worse since neither Dream nor Quackity was bad people either. Not when you've met them. And Nick wasn't either.

Sapnap, not Nick.

Aside from maybe the fact that they've probably murdered people before in their career. Multiple of them.

"Well then," Karl concluded, smiling back at Callahan. "Someone will come and check you throughout the day, you're recovering pretty well, I know you don't wanna be bothered with the charts and everything so-" Karl closed his chart. "I guess you'll have to believe me when I say you're going good."

Karl tucked the chart under his arm before looking back at Callahan, waiting for any additional remarks and comments, but the silent man had already tucked away his whiteboard, indicating that he was done with communicating.

"Alright," Karl nodded. "I'll come back to check on you after my surgery. Please, please eat your food, I know cafeteria food sucks, but you need to eat-" Callahan simply scrunched up his nose. "Okay, be difficult like that, I'll giving you the lime jello instead of the strawberry one."

With a wave of a hand, Karl left the room listening to Callahan's chuckle as he started to browse the TV channels. He stowed the charts back at the nurses' station, reminding Jesse to page him if any police or detectives try to talk to Callahan, yes even if Karl was in surgery, before going to meet Techno for their heart/liver surgery.

"Hey," *Oh no.*

George's entire body stiffened at the, regrettably, now familiar voice in his ear. Honestly, he was to blame for this. He shouldn't have been looking down at his phone and kept guard based on what has been happening in the past few days, but alas, he was bored and there was a journal he's been wanting to read.

"You look good today," Dream complimented. "I like the blue scrubs on you."

"What do you want?" George sighed, trying his best to ignore his- to ignore him, and kept reading the next page of the article.

"I just said you look nice today in the blue scrubs," Dream said in playful defense. "What? I can't compliment a handsome doctor on his cute blue scrubs?"

George sighed and clicked his phone shut before turning to Dream and looking up at him. The man was tall, and like always, wearing his signature face mask to cover the bottom half of his face. Bright green eyes smiling down at him.

"The whole hospital wears blue scrubs," George said pointedly. "I wear blue scrubs every day."

"Well maybe you look cute every day," Dream shrugged easily.

George quickly looked away, trying to cover his pinkish cheeks. Dream's little chuckle only proved that he had failed completely. This coffee cart line could not move any slower.

"What are you even doing here?" George cleared his throat and straightened out his white coat.

"Waiting for coffee," Dream said.

"You weren't behind me," George looked behind him to see the intern Davis on her phone. "Davis, why would you let some guy cut in front of you?" He barked.

"Uh- I uh, Doctor Davidson I-i-" Davis' eyes snapped away from her phone and immediately started stuttering.

"Come now George, you don't have to get mad at your intern, she was just being nice," Dream said kindly.

"I wasn't getting mad," George insisted, though his tone was harsh. "She shouldn't let people cut in, especially people who don't deserve it," He glared at Dream.

"I thought he was with you," Davis whispered softly.

"Awh, isn't that cute," Dream cooed. "She thinks I'm with you."

"Well he's not, so you can take your spot back," George said to Davis before looking back at Dream. "And you can take a hike to the back of the line."

"Well, I think Davis here won't mind if I just wait here-" Dream's smirk could even be seen through his mask. "Would you darlin'?"

George hated how easily his intern folded at the flirtatious attempt Dream had on her but hated, even more, the way his stomach flipped at Dream's low and sultry voice.

"Yes, yes she does mind-" George concluded for his intern though the young girl was shaking his head.

"Oh come on," Dream gently nudge George. "I won't even buy coffee, I hate coffee, I'll just stand here with you. Wait with you."

"You hate-" George looked at Dream in disbelief. "You hate-"

"Yeah, so I'm not really cutting in, I just won't buy anything," Dream shrugged.

"So you're just set on harassing me?" George frowned.

"Harassing?" Dream gasped dramatically. "Davis, does it look like I'm harassing Doctor- Davidson was it?"

"Davis, don't answer that," George shot down his particularly starstruck intern. "Stalking then," He immediately turned back to Dream.

"I mean, it would be stalking if I don't have family in there, but I do-" Dream nudged towards the hospital. "So it's more like very convenient, delightful, wonderful coincidental encounters."

"Well you said you don't like coffee, so-" George mumbled mockingly. "Stalking."

"You looked lonely," Dream said. "Standing here all alone. Pretty and alone." George had to fully bow his head because even an idiot can see he was blushing. "I'm keeping you company."

"I don't need company," George muttered.

"Doesn't he look like he needs company?" Dream playfully asked Davis.

"Stop harassing the intern," George exclaimed. "And what's taking the coffee so long?"

"Machine broke," George heard Punz's voice from the front of the line and he was flooded with relief. At least he had a quick escape out if needed. And he kinda needed it right now.

You'd think with the new machines and money rolling in, they'd have some spare money to fix or even buy the coffee machine in the coffee cart and the one in the attendings' lounge too. God did he really wish none of the coffee machines were broken.

"You know," Dream began. "There's this really cute and cozy diner just a few blocks down. Really homey, the owners are this cute old couple, married for 57 years," He said softly. "I reckon I can drive you there for a coffee and back before your break is over."

"No, thank you," George shot it down immediately.

"Oh come on," Dream said. "They're always happy to make you a fresh pot. They also sell delicious pasta so it's a good place for lunch and dinner, and I know you need the extra boost of energy being the badass surgeon that you are-" he coaxed.

"I'm allergic," George answered a little too fast.

"To what?" Dream blinked. "Pasta?"

"I-" George stuttered. "Yes." He's an idiot.

"You're celiac?" Dream questioned, staring flatly at his lie. "You ate like four slices of pizza yesterday."

"You counted how many slices of pizza-" George gasped

"Oh, you want to focus on that part, and not the part where you lied to me," Dream interjected, before yet again, turning at a very flabbergasted-looking intern. "He's not actually celiac is he?"

"Davis, don't answer him," George said again though the intern had no intention to answer anyone really, she was just standing there gaping and confused.

"Look, the coffee machine is broken and you also need lunch," Dream offered. "I have a really fast car. It'll be like half an hour."

"I'm on call," George said definitively. "I'm working. I can't exactly leave premises."

"Okay, so I'll pick you up at 8 when you get off your shift," Dream winked. "It's a date."

"I- wh-" George sputtered, but Dream was already walking away. "I didn't say yes!"

"But you gave a conditional no," Dream grinned. "That means without the condition, you being on shift, it's a yes," He explained.

"No, it doesn't!" George yelled but Dream raised a two-finger wave at him, dismissing him completely.

"See you at 8 George," Dream sang before disappearing.

George gave a very defeated and irritated sigh.

"Doctor Davidson-" Davis' small voice piped up. "Are you really celiac? Because you've been asking us to bring you a scone every morning and they're not-"

"I'm don't have celiacs, Davis," George sighed tiredly, finally stepping out of the line to walk towards Punz.

"Now what the hell was that?" Punz muttered amusedly the moment George walked up to him.

"You couldn't be bothered to come and help me out?" George said. "I don't know, tell him to leave or something?"

"I don't wanna lose my spot in the line," Punz said easily, and George rolled his eyes. "He's *doomsday kit*?"

"Yes," George mumbled.

"Right," Punz drawled. "And you want me to tell *doomsday kit* to fuck off like he wasn't bleeding to death a few days ago and now walking around and asking you out like nothing happened?" Punz laughed. "Plus his current occupation-"

"Weren't you an army surgeon?" George said pointedly. "You chicken."

"Do I look like I have a rifle on me right now?" Punz said. "That guy on the other hand-"

"Forget about him, don't talk about him anymore," George sneered bitterly.

"Okay," Punz hummed. "It just doesn't happen every day you know."

"What?" George said.

"Date with your soulmate," Punz made sure his voice was hushed enough.

"Right, because I'm definitely going to go on a date with him," George said sarcastically.

"Well, you can't avoid him forever," Punz said. "He's persistent."

"I can and I will," George said. "Watch me," He said before walking away.

He came back a few seconds later though.

"Can you-"

"Yeah, I'll bring you a cup of coffee up to the lounge," Punz brushed George off, knowing exactly what he was going to ask.

"Thank you," George nodded before stomping off in anger.

"You good to close Ranboo?" Techno asked.

"Yes," Ranboo answered enthusiastically. "Yes, of course, I'd be happy to."

"All yours," Techno declared stepping away from the operating table, allowing his intern to finish out the approximately 9 and 1/2 hour-long surgery.

Karl followed behind him, degloving himself before stepping out of the sterile area and going to the scrubbing station, washing his hands next to Techno.

"Since you begged, and I mean *begged*, to be on the surgery-" Techno mumbled as he scrubbed down his hands. "Any chance you wanna take post-op?"

"You wish," Karl chuckled. "Just get Ranboo to do it."

"Yeah I thought so," Techno hummed. "You only want the easy part."

"If your idea of '*easy*' is grafting an artery from your patient's arm to compensate for the transplant team butchering the right hepatic vein during recovery-" Karl shook his head.

"Nice clutch, by the way," Techno complimented. "Antfrost would be proud."

"Ooh," Karl winced. "I think he'd seriously question why we didn't page vascular for help and severely judge my work, so I don't know about *proud*."

"You did fine," Techno dried his hands off. "Not as clean as Ant probably would've-"

"Okay, you were just complimenting me," Karl frowned. "Can we go back to that?"

"Patient is alive," Techno said. "That's all that matters."

"Thank you," Karl sighed. "I needed the distraction."

"And thankfully, you weren't paged at all today," Techno said. "No police, no detectives."

And by the worst of coincidences and luck, Karl pager started beeping. A quick look called him to the front lobby, not to mention that the page came from Niki. Now, a random page could really mean anything. After all, the chief of surgery is a very busy man. Though, paging *K9* instead of an empty message or even 911 is a pretty obvious and clear message.

"Damn it," Karl cursed, taking off his scrub cap and show covers. "You had to jinx it," he glared accusingly.

"You're joking," Techno said. "They're not downstairs- It's been like 10 hours."

Karl didn't even have time to express his further frustration as he was already sprinting down the hallway and the stairwell (which really was kind of a mistake, it was 4 flights of stairs and he thought it would be faster than the elevator, but it wasn't) before navigating his way to the front lobby.

The sun was setting, that was how long he'd been inside the OR that day. Prep plus the surgery took the entire day, and he was thankful for the distraction. But he really did think that he would get to avoid the detectives one more day. The orange beams of lights were shining to the wall of windows across to his eyes. He came to a halting stop in front of Niki, who looked a little panicked, almost gasping when Karl ran at her.

"Oh! Chief, oh god," Niki said.

"Where are they?" He asked hurriedly.

"Somebody came and took them upstairs," Niki said.

"What?" Karl exclaimed. "What? And you didn't stop them?"

"He said he was family," Niki tried to explain her way out. "If family invites them up to visit, I can't really do-"

He can't really catch a break now, can he? Karl's pager went off one more time, this one from Nurse Jesse paging him a non-medical emergency which he could only guess what for. Karl didn't even have time to hear the end of Niki's sentence before running off to the elevators. Listen, he is not going to run up four flights of stairs especially with the codeword being *up*.

It's the second time that day he nearly sent himself flying across the nurses' station in front of Callahan's room. Nurse Jesse stood up, all wide-eyed, and only pointed towards the room. Through the glass door and the slightly open curtains, Karl could see the two detectives that he'd been successfully keeping at bay for the past few days.

The two detectives had their little notepad out, seemingly both talking and nodding as they received information but for the life of him, Karl swore he couldn't see Callahan's board. His patient was wildly moving his hands in what you could definitely tell was ASL, something Karl saw, though not a lot, he also did with both Dream and Quackity. But this was faster, more fluent.

It took Karl about two seconds of his own judgment before he barged into the room, clearing his throat so as to declare his presence. When the two detectives turned to see him, that's when he saw the translator in the room. The extra person. Callahan's family.

"Gentlemen," Karl tried to be as subtle as he could, but his voice cracked at his throat when his gaze fell on Sapnap.

"Chief Jacobs," Detective Roland greeted. "You're out of surgery."

"You didn't-" Karl started softly. "You didn't-"

"No, of course not," Detective Simpson chuckled. "We thought we'd come by before clocking off in case you were finished. But then we met Mr. Calder in the lobby and-"

Calder. Nick Calder. Right. Even Callahan's name was registered as Calder.

"I thought I should be here to translate for my brother," Sapnap said quietly, not entirely towards Karl but towards the room in general. "Could be useful for whatever questions the detectives had."

"You've been most helpful Mr. Calder," Detective Roland said to Sapnap who only smiled a little bit, his eyes still desperately avoiding Karl's. "Because of how late this interview is, we did have a lot of details already figured out, we're just happy you were able to confirm some details," He said, this time turning towards Callahan, who only nodded happily.

"The partial plate really does help, and we hope you have a speedy recovery, Mr. Calder," Detective Simpson nodded towards Callahan who's yet to stop nodding.

As fast as they came, the two detectives that have been keeping Karl up at night due to his illegal doings showed themselves out politely with no further questions. Karl didn't even need to show them out. He stood in the hallway, looking at them talk until they disappeared into the elevator. Catching eyes with Nurse Jesse, both of them sighed before Karl went back into the room.

"I'm sorry," Karl apologized immediately. "I told them to page me if they came to you. I was in surgery all day, and-"

"I invited them," Sapnap spoke up. "I brought them up so that they can talk to Callahan, that wasn't your-"

"I hope it wasn't too obvious that I was hiding you, though it didn't look like they thought you did anything wrong," Karl continued with his sentence as if Sapnap hadn't said a single word. "Does this mean you're clear now?"

Callahan looked like a deer trapped in headlights. He looked back and forth between Karl and Sapnap. Karl who was really holding on to the act that Sapnap didn't even exist in the room and Sapnap, who was resignedly sighing and rolling his eyes. Callahan gave Karl a very hesitant nod.

"Good," Karl said. "Well, I thought you didn't wanna talk to the police, you know?"

"He didn't but that's because-" Sapnap began and Karl threw him the dirtiest look possible. "Look I know you don't wanna see me and you wanna pretend that I'm not here, but I am, and these are direct translations from Callahan," He sighed exasperatedly. "I'm faster than the whiteboard."

Karl had a persistent scowl on his face though he felt a little embarrassed that while trying intensely to act like Sapnap was invisible, he'd completely missed the fact that Callahan had been signing the whole conversation through. He took a deep breath before taking a step back, silently looking at Callahan who smiled sheepishly before continuing to sign.

"He didn't wanna talk to the police without me because I'm most fluent in sign, and he was afraid that things wouldn't translate well and we might get caught," Sapnap said. "But he didn't really have a problem talking with them because we didn't do anything wrong and also we're very-" Sapnap winced. "-good liars."

"Don't I know it," Karl mumbled under his breath.

"He means that we can make a good story to cover for ourselves not lie as in-" Sapnap started off defensively.

"Callahan, that's weird, your hands aren't moving," Karl commented sarcastically and loudly, mind you, much to Sapnap's despair.

"I'm right," Sapnap said, this time, in fact, translating from Callahan but still only received with mild annoyance from Karl. "That's what he said!" Sapnap exclaimed.

"Right," Karl muttered to himself. "Well, that's one off the table. Do you need anything else from me?"

Callahan continued to sign what looked to be really long sentences but the silence coming from Sapnap was quite concerning, to say the least. Karl wanted to question his credentials, even just give him a little judgmental look for failing to translate, but he has to restrain himself from communicating with the ghost. It wasn't until Callahan stopped that Sapnap said something. Nothing particularly useful though.

"I'm not saying that," Sapnap said. Callahan signed what looked to be a very angry and adamant reply. "I am not saying that," Sapnap insisted. "Calla I don't care tha- No, I'm not gon- I don't care that you got shot, I mean Dream also got shot and he doesn't go around aski- Right, because it's my fault I can't visit you."

Yeah, Karl really wished he could understand what the very aggressive sign language coming from Callahan is saying right now but alas, he could only hear one side of the argument from Sapnap's voice.

God, his voice-

"No, we're not going that," Sapnap shook his head. "Callahan, I can't do that, I won't. I'm not saying that to him-"

"Just do it," Karl cursed himself for breaking his own stubbornness. "I don't have all day, I've got dozens of requisition requests to evaluate before I can go home. Just-" He waved his hand lazily.

Callahan smiled triumphantly, looking at Sapnap pointedly, waiting until Sapnap finished looking so exasperated, and nodded at him. Only then did Callahan begin to sign again.

"My brother," Sapnap began, glaring at Callahan. *"This is straight from his mouth, I promise,"* He quickly added. *"My brother is a smart and nice guy, and I know you're mad at him, but he can do some things to make you a little happier because he does want you to be a little happier."*

"Calla-" Karl said warningly but Callahan simply pointed a finger at him to stop him in his tracks.

"My brother is going to go around the hospital and fix those machines you said didn't have techs in town because like I said, he's smart and he wants to help you," Sapnap said.

"He doesn't want to help me," Karl responded immediately.

"I do," Sapnap replied just as quickly, getting a side-eye from Karl before pressing his lips shut. "That wasn't from Callahan, sorry."

"Cal, we're talking about million-dollar machines, I don't think that's the smartest idea," Karl said. "He told me he was a computer programmer which-" Karl scoffed. "I don't even know if I could trust anymore, and you want him to mess around with X-rays and lasers and the new centrifuge in the path lab?"

"Well I'm actually a certified engineer and I'm also a genius. I think I'm probably smart enough to figure those machines out, but I doubt you'll let me do the heavy work-" Sapnap said monotonously. *"So my brother will have to wheel me around and do the work on my instructions."*

"Calla-" Karl sighed. "I don't think-"

"Let us help," Sapnap said. *"You saved my life and my brother's life, this is the least we can do."*

Karl looked at Callahan, genuinely surprising himself at how much he liked his patient. Then

again the trend stands, he liked his brother quite a lot too before everything went so wrong so quickly. It sounded kind of good.

"Either that or I'll have to dismantle your TV because I'm bored," Sapnap continued.

Karl has gotten a really bad habit of dumping his issues on Callahan who was an unbelievably good listener due to obvious reasons, of course, he would know all of Karl's troubles. Not having to call 4 different companies to send in their techs would give Karl an extra hour or two of rest and honestly, that sounds just about amazing. Even if it means having to deal with Sapnap for a few hours.

"Alright," Karl conceded. "What do you need? Tools? The 2000 page manual?"

"Just a list of the machines and where they're located in the hospital," Sapnap said. *"Dream and Quackity are coming later with Callahan's personal toolbox."*

"Oh great, there'll be four of you," Karl said sarcastically. He has yet to see his patient look that excited before. Callahan looked downright giddy.

"Dream might not stay," Sapnap informed him. *"So it's three."*

"Well I don't trust you at all," Karl said conclusively. "So I'll be babysitting. You won't need a list."

"Even better," Sapnap really tried hard to suppress a grin, but Karl caught it.

Against his own will, Karl hated how much he's missed that handsome smile. And he hated how his stomach fluttered involuntarily at even the thought of spending time with Sapnap again, even if there was going to be a 3-brother buffer.

It'll be fine. He can just, ignore Sapnap. Right?

George almost forgot.

In the best way possible, George went through the rest of his day in absolute blissful ignorance and he almost forgot. He almost forgot the handsome half-of-a-face that haunts him at night, that shows up in his coffee line, the smile that he could see so clearly even behind the mask just from his eyes alone.

But when he walked out of the lobby at about 8:30 PM after wrapping up his shift and saw the tall blond man sitting at the bench outside, looking as sleek and cool in his all-black fit and complete with a black trench coat, George did not forget. Not anymore.

"You're half an hour late," Dream's voice sang. George had always been mean since he started showing up around the hospital but he did feel kind of bad that Dream's voice was gentle and not mad at all, even if George was about 30 minutes late to the date that he didn't agree on.

"I already said no," George replied.

"You did," Dream said. "And you won't reconsider?"

George sighed, staring flatly at the man who, unfortunately, has been nothing but sort of kind and mildly entertaining to him. He watched as Dream looked down, a little defeated smile on his face, before looking back up to meet George's face.

"I thought so," Dream sighed. He nodded and held out a brown paper bag in front of George.

"What-" George mumbled hesitantly. "What is this?"

"Food," Dream said. "You won't go to dinner with me, but you still need to eat and I wasn't lying about the diner so I got you food. Gluten-free portobello mushroom ravioli, just in case you weren't lying about having celiacs, but also a slice of apple pie, in case you were lying about celiacs and still wanted dessert."

Now, this isn't fair.

George's jaw dropped, staring at the bag neatly folded at the top, held up in front of him by a man who clearly put some care and thought into this. He didn't even know what to do. Not accepting it just seemed crueler than anything he's done before.

"Come on," Dream coaxed. "Big surgeon man needs to eat, I'm sure you saved a lot of lives today."

"Uh-" George swallowed bitterly, his hand slowly reaching up to take the food from Dream's hands. "Uh, than- thank you."

"You're welcome," Dream nodded. "Have a nice evening, doctor."

George watched as Dream walked away, no further questions, no extra negotiation or persuasion. As much as he's flirted before, turns out he still knew when to stop and where the boundaries are. Respectful. Damn it, he was respectful.

Don't do it. Don't do it. Don't-

"You have a car?" George called out, causing Dream to stop and turn back to face him. Dream tilted his head, waiting for George to clarify. "My- My ride is stuck in the hospital babysitting your- friends? Brothers?"

"Right," Dream said slowly. "Yeah, they're helping to fix some of your machines."

"Yeah," George bit his lip. "So-"

"So?" Dream replied slowly, a small smile creeping on his face.

"Drive me home?"

Chapter End Notes

hope you guys liked it, dnf and kn are peeking over the horizon. ! hopefully the next chapter wouldn't take too long though snf week is coming and i want to prep for it.

comments and kudos are super appreciated !!

more updates/wips should be coming soon sub to user to get notifs !

follow me on [twitter](#) !

End Notes

Day 6 done

this will be a multichap very much like Got your six, though still, depends on response. Like response will dictate how long or short the continuations will be, but there definitely will be a continuation.

please please comment about what you think of this story! kudos are also very pog

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bye

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